ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PUBLIC LIBRARY

OF THE

TOWN OF STONEHAM

1947

REPORT OF TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC LIBRARY

To the Citizens of Stoneham:

The Trustees of the Public Library present herewith their annual report together with the reports of the Librarian and the Children's Librarian.

The successful operation of a public Library depends principally on the supply of books, the service and management and suitable housing.

With respect to these requirements, it may be said, briefly, that our library has a good number of books for a community of this size, approximately 28,000 volumes.

The cost of books has considerably increased in recent years. A large proportion of the cost has been met by the interest from bequests given for the purchase of books.

The service and direct management have primarily to do with the arrangement and availability of the books for distribution and reference which we believe are adequate. The yearly expense for service and managemnet is borne by the town.

The original library building, built in 1904 from a gift of $15,000 by Andrew Carnegie, and the large addition made in 1930 from a bequest of $100,000 by Miss Annie Hamilton Brown of Stoneham have provided a building of superior excellence.

It may be noted in this connection that the yearly cost of fuel now, for the whole building is no greater than it was for the smaller building because of the heating system in use compared with the hot air furnaces of 1904.

The Trustees of the Brown Bequest, entrusted with the control of expenditures from the funds remaining in their care after the cost of building the addition, allowed $2000 this year for work to be done for the betterment of the library.

Accordingly, rubber floor tiling, only recently available, has been laid on the floors not requiring it when the addition and reconstruction were made. All the rooms of the main floor of the library are now provided with this handsome and serviceable covering.

A rest room for members of the staff has been finished and provided with suitable furniture and electrical equipment for service and convenience.

Care has been given to the outside of the building and to the grounds. The trim of the building has been painted and the gutters repaired. At small expense, repairs have been made on the lawn by the Park Department and beds of flowering plants arranged and kept supplied during the season, the whole making a pleasing setting for the memorial boulder of the Veterans of World War I.

The Garden Club has presented to the Library its collection fo books on gardening which are now held on a separate set of shelves in the adult reading room. It has continued the practice of exhibiting seasonal flowers which has been greatly appreciated by patrons of the Library.

In addition to its use for library purposes, Library Hall has served the citizens in its use by organizations having general civic interests, such as the Visiting Nurse Association, the Historical Society, the Garden Club, the Home Owners Association, theh Book Review Group, and the Play Reading Group.

There has been a succession of most interesting exhibits arranged by the librarians in the show case in the adult reading room, as well as special seasonal exhibits in the children's room under the particular care of the children's librarian.

During Art Week, there was an exhibition of paintings by local artists including Mr. Carl Brodeen, Miss Laura Lee, and Miss May Jones.

For the Spring Book Festival, May 10 to 17, there was an exhibition of new books in both adult and children's rooms and the teachers of the elementary schools were invited to a tea and advance inspection.

For the observance of Fall Book Week, in addition to the display of new books, there were most interesting talks and displays in Library Hall arranged especially for the Children's Department.

Ill health has caused Miss Peyton to relinquish the position as secretary of the Board which she has filled in a notable manner for many years. We are glad that she remains on the Board for continued counsel and judgment.

Two members of the Board have resigned during the year. Mrs. Merrifield found it advisable due to ill health and necessary absence, and Mr. Hanford because of absence due to business and professional requirements. In our long association we have worked in harmony and confidence and we regret to have these changes.

At a joint meeting of the Selectmen and Trustees, Mrs. G. Richard Barnstead Jr. and Mr. Alfred R. Johnson were elected to fill the vacancies until the town meeting in March.

Under the leadership of our Librarian, Miss Demery, there has been continued cooperation and efficiency in service.

We are fortunate in having Mrs. Houston as Children's Librarian who continues to do so much for the children to increase their knowledge of books and their interest in reading.

To them and to all the members of our library staff, the Trustees wish to express their appreciation for work well done.

Attention is called to the reports of the Librarian and Children's Librarian which follow.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES H. CHASE, Chairman,
FRED A. LAWSON, Secretary protem,
ALICE V. PEYTON,
GEORGE E. MacNEIL, JR.
NANCE B. BARNSTEAD,
ALFRED R. JOHNSON,
Trustees of Stoneham Public Library.

Report of the Librarian

To the Trustees of the Stoneham Public Library:

I present the eighty-ninth annual report of the Stoneham Public Library for the year ending, December 31, 1947. It has been a year of reorganization and adjustment to changes in procedure, both for the Staff and the public.

Circulation

The circulation in the Adult Department has been 48,217; in the Children's Department, 73,126, making a total circulation of 121,343. That is a per capita circulation of 10.08. Fiction ranks first in circulation, periodicals next, with biography, useful arts, and fine arts following in importance. We have borrowed 32 books from libraries of other towns. We have lent 1.

Reference

To give some idea of the value of a library, other than that of book circulation, record has been kept of the number of reference questions answered by the Staff during the year. This does not include "Tello Test," but represents actual research work done. We have answered 2,169 such queries.

We have added 52 volumes to the Reference Department collection.

Speaking of "Tello Test"; one of our patrons was able, through use of the Library, to win $65.00.

Most of the reference work is done for high school students, and the Reference Room is well patronized, both afternoons and evenings.

Books Added

This year there has been added 1,489 volumes, 919 for adults and 570 for children. Our book stock is approximately 29,599. Recataloging of the library has been started. This involves much weeding out of old and worn out books and replacing whenever necessary. Until this is completed there will be no truly accurate record of total books in the library.

Periodicals

We receive over 90 periodicals and 6 newspapers. A few are gifts, but the great majority are paid for by the town. "Plays" for the Children's Department, "The New Yorker," "The Saturday Review of Literature" and "The Yale Review" have been added this year. These are all popular.

Children's Department

Mrs. Bertha R. Houston, Children's Librarian, will tell her own story of the many unusual and worthwhile activities of this department. Her work is extremely successful and reaches an ever increasing portion of the town's young inhabitants.

Gifts

We have added 120 books through gifts from various people in the town, and the Stoneham Garden Club which gave us its entire library. This makes a valuable and much used addition. The Stoneham Garden Club also gives us subscrpitions to 3 magazines, and places in the library throughout the year specimens of unusual flowers and flower arrangements. In these ways the Garden Club does a very real service to the town.

Miscellaneous Activities in the Adult Department

We try to keep special collections of books of timely interest in accessible places in the library, and exhibitions representing the hobbies of many townspeople have been placed in the show case for all to enjoy. A selection of books is kept at the "Home for Aged People" and changed whenever desired. A "Book Review Group" and a "Play Rading Group" were started in the fall and have been meeting once a month since. The reviews have been given by library patrons. They have been well done and have been greatly enjoyed. We appreciate the time given and work done by the reviewers. The "Play Reading Group" is small, but those who participate seem to enjoy it. In November, during "Book Week," Miss Marian of the "Studio Shop," Boston, gave a very interesting and colorful exhibit of table settings and tapestries in Library Hall.

Looking Forward

During the coming year, we hope to continue with the recataloging of the library, the sorting out of useful from useless material, and systematizing of what we decide to keep. We hope to do more reference work, to circulate more books, to have more speakers in Library Hall, and to have more and larger exhibits.

Staff

The Staff is as follows: Susan E. Demery, Librarian, Mrs. Bertha R. Houston, Children's Librarian, Margaret I. Golding,

Assistant to the Children's Librarian, Mrs. Lauretta A. Wade, Circulation Assistant, Lena Guastaferro, Jean Quincy and Priscilla Pearson, part-time Assistants.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Staff for their continued cooperation and good fellowship, and to the Trustees for their support and understanding.

Respectfully submitted,

SUSAN E. DEMERY, Librarian.

Statistics

Circulation	
Adult Circulation	48,217
Juvenile Circulation	73,126
Total	121,343
Inter-Library Loan	
Borrowed	32
Lent	1
Registration	
New Registrations (adult)	593
New Registrations (juvenile)	238
Total Registrations (adult)	4804
Total Registrations (juvenile)	2456
Reference Questions Answered	
Adult	853
Juvenile	1316
Days Library Open	303
Book Stock	
Number of volumes at beginning of year	28,145
Withdrawn during year	35
Adult books added by purchase	799
Adult books added by gift	120
Juvenile books added	570
Total	29,599
Fines on over-due books turned over to Town	$458.05
Sale of old papers	3.00
Sale of old desk	10.00
Total turned over to Town	$471.05

Report of the Children's Librarian

To the Trustees of the Stoneham Public Library:

I present the second annual report of the Children's Room of the Stoneham Public Library for the year ending December 31, 1947.

In the Children's Room each year an endeavor to stimulate interest in books and the use of the Library is made through various activities. A method of interesting young people in the library technique and books is to allow them to work for Scout badges at the Library. Altogether twelve girls have enrolled for such work.

Exhibits

Seasonal exhibits were "tie-ups" with books, such as a collection of character dolls of "Alice in Wonderland," a covered wagon with books on the "Pioneer West," a collection of buttons representing famous book characters and paintings, historical silver spoons, figurines of the Kate Greenaway books, the handicrafts of the Girl Scout Day Camp, an exhibit from China and the Christmas scene of Santa's Workshop.

Spring Book Festival

New books and original drawings were exhibited at the Spring Book Festival and Miss Helen Rathburn, author of "Easter Surprise," told how she happened to write her book. Miss Rathburn gave her autograph to one hundred and forty children.

Summer Reading Club

The Reading Club for boys and girls this year was in the form of a Radio Playhouse. Many plays were read and throughout the summer plays were given for the members of the club. It has been so popular that it is now a part of the Library's activities. In order that all of the young folks may participate, sound effects, ushers, and publicity are also a part of the club.

Story Hours

Story hours are held every Saturday morning at ten o'clock. In November a pre-school story hour was started on Friday afternoons at three o'clock and has been well attended in spite of the inclement weather. Special story hours were held during Spring Book Festival, Book Week and Christmas.

Service to Schools

The usual course of instruction in the use of the card catalog and reference books was given to the fifth and sixth grades. Also, thirty classroom deposits of twenty-five or more books were made, with the deposits changing every two months or less as the teachers wished.

Book Week

For Book Week this year we had many new posters and original drawings of some of the outstanding artists. About two hundred new books were added to the Library during this time. Mr. Robert Winchell of Woburn, entertained about one hundred and fifty boys and girls with a talk and demonstration on plas-

tics. He brought many samples of his work. Some of the boys and girls had an opportunity to help with the demonstrations. Again we had the pleasure of a puppet show given by Miss Cronin and Miss Boutwell, of Woburn. To a very enthusiastic group of boys and girls from the second and third grades as well as the two kindergartens, the "Gingerbread Man," "Storybook Animals" and a scene from "Cinderella" was presented. The boys and girls of the Radio Playhouse gave their first play for the public, "Twin Trouble," with a cast of twenty boys and girls. The next play will be given in the spring. The short story contest was held again this year, with four hundred and twenty-five young people submitting original stories. Twelve books were given as prizes for the best stories in the opinion of the judges.

Christmas

At Christmas this year we had classes hear the recording of "A Christmas Carol," by Charles Dickens. Christmas carols, a tree, and Santa and his workshop were also featured.

Statistics

Books deposited to the school classrooms	30
Story hours	50
Special story hours	18
Total attendance	2,768

Respectfully submitted,

BERTHA R. HOUSTON, Children's Librarian.

Library

Public Library, Salaries		
Librarian	2,477.50	
Assistant	1,200.00	
Children's Librarian	2,133.00	
Asst. Children's Librarian	1,242.56	
Clerks	769.35	
Janitor	1,966.30	
Other Labor	125.06	
		9,913.77
Public Library, Expense		
Books	1,995.16	
Periodicals	308.24	
Library Supplies	267.91	
Binding	484.62	
Fuel and Light	1,029.37	
Building Maintenance	658.88	
Stationery Printing and Postage	41.00	

Telephone	41.55	
All Other	12.86	
		4,839.59
Public Library—Special Bldg. Fund		
Alteration Contract	514.00	
Painting and Decorating	225.00	
Tile Installation	872.00	
Furnishings	171.90	
		1,782.90